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Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace in IT Sector

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Abstract: ***The universal problem of workplace is sexual harassment of women, necessitates through exploration and practical aids. Sexual harassment is a pervasive issue affecting women, globally, with profound consequences on their well-being, productivity and career advancement. This study examines the prevalence, types, and factors contributing to sexual harassment at the workplace, as well as its effects on women and organizations. The aim is to find out the impact of sexual harassment on women and their workplace productivity. It was observed that women tend to face sexual harassment frequently and there is a lack of awareness about the complaint productivity. These studies indicate 40-60% of women experience sexual harassment at work, with severe forms affecting 1 in 5 women. Organizations must prioritize prevention, support, and accountability to create a safe and inclusive environment. Sexual harassment at the workplace requires urgent attention, organization must prioritize prevention, support and accountability to create a safe and inclusive environment for women.***
Keywords: Sexual harassment, workplace, women, Productivity, prevention strategies, consequences.

I. INTRODUCTION

Workplace sexual harassment is a widespread problem that threatens the safety, dignity, and productivity of employees, especially women. It includes a variety of behaviors, ranging from improper remarks and jokes to more serious actions like unwelcome advances and coercion. This phenomenon affects the individual directly concerned and also fosters a toxic atmosphere at work, which can obstruct organizational growth and lower morale. Sexual harassment still troubles many people today, especially in the workplace. In addition to providing a hostile work atmosphere, this type of misconduct jeopardises victims' general wellbeing and career advancement. Effectively addressing and combating sexual harassment is crucial to creating a secure and welcoming workplace.

It is concerning that sexual harassment occurs so frequently in the workplace. Research suggests that a significant proportion of women encounter harassment in their professional lives. This problem cuts across industries, impacting women in manufacturing, corporate offices, healthcare, and educational settings.

Sexual harassment at work is becoming more widely recognized as a form of violence against women and a violation of women's rights worldwide. Indeed, violence against women in both the public and private spheres is still justified by the social construct of male privileges. Sexual harassment is essentially a mirror reflecting male dominance over women, which upholds patriarchal relationships. It is commonly known that providing women with safe working circumstances boosts their productivity and promotes their involvement in the workforce, both of which benefit the country as a whole.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Both Stanko (1998) and Mac Kinnon Aggarwal (1992) define sexual harassment in ways that highlight its effects on women and analyses it from a perspective of gender relations. According to these criteria, sexual harassment at work is defined as an unwanted, explicit behavior that takes place as a result of unequal power dynamics and has a significant negative impact on women's employment. According to research, sexual harassment is widespread in a variety of cultures and occupations. It has been estimated that between 25% and 85% of women have experienced sexual harassment at work, indicating that a considerable proportion of women face harassment at work. Psychological consequences like anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem are common among victims. According to the literature, harassment can result in poor job performance, absenteeism, and physical health problems. Moreover, the effects go beyond the person and impact productivity, workplace morale, and overall organizational effectiveness. Companies that ignore harassment risk legal action, harm to their brand, and higher employee turnover.

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Sexual harassment of women at the workplace is a pervasive issue that affects millions of women worldwide (Gruber, 1998). Studies have consistently shown that sexual harassment is a significant problem in various industries, including healthcare, education, and corporate sectors (US EEOC, 2016). Fitzgerald et al. (1997) found that 50% of women reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment at work.

Furthermore, research has highlighted the negative consequences of sexual harassment on women's physical and mental health, job satisfaction, and career advancement (O'Connell & Korabik, 2000). Willness et al. (2007) also found that organizational culture and leadership play a crucial role in preventing or perpetuating sexual harassment.

III. OBJECTIVES

1) To study sexual harassment at the workplace.
2) To study the level of stress while facing sexual harassment.
3) To study those factors that affects them during their work.
4) To study the importance or need of safe working environment for females.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study employed a quantitative research design, using a survey-based approach to collect data from a sample of 25 women aged 18-60 who have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace or in educational settings. An online survey questionnaire using a standardized instrument, such as the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ), was used to collect data on demographic characteristics, experiences of sexual harassment, and the impact of sexual harassment on mental health and well-being. The study ensured informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality, and provided participants with information about support resources and services for survivors of sexual harassment.

A. Sample Selection

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 25 women employees working in IT sector, including healthcare, and education.

B. Sources of Data Collection

Primary data: This information is collected from the online surveys.

C. Secondary Data

The secondary data was collected for the purpose of this paper through the review of various research papers, books, journal articles etc.

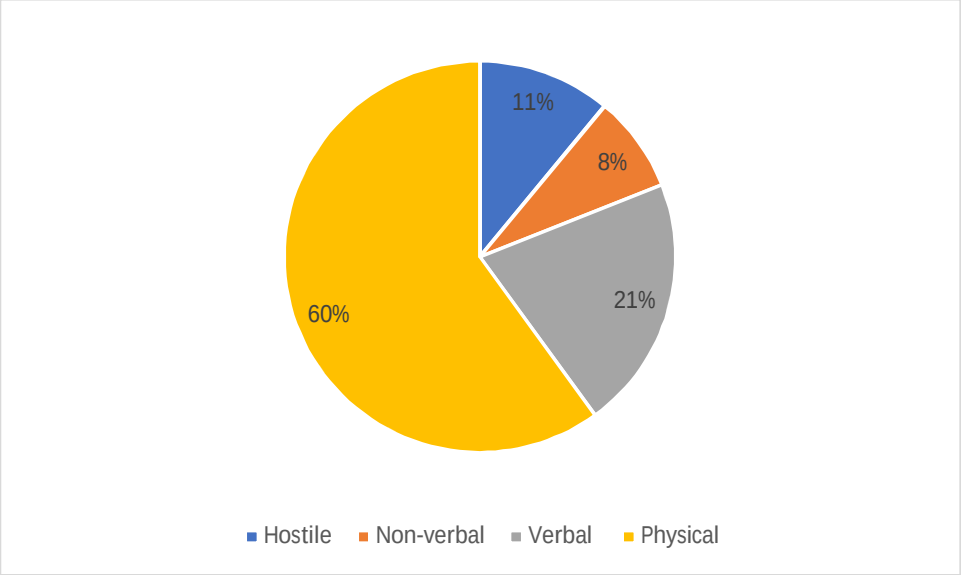
D. Tools for Data Collection

Questionnaire is the tool used for the data collection.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

1) What kind of sexual harassment do you face during your job?

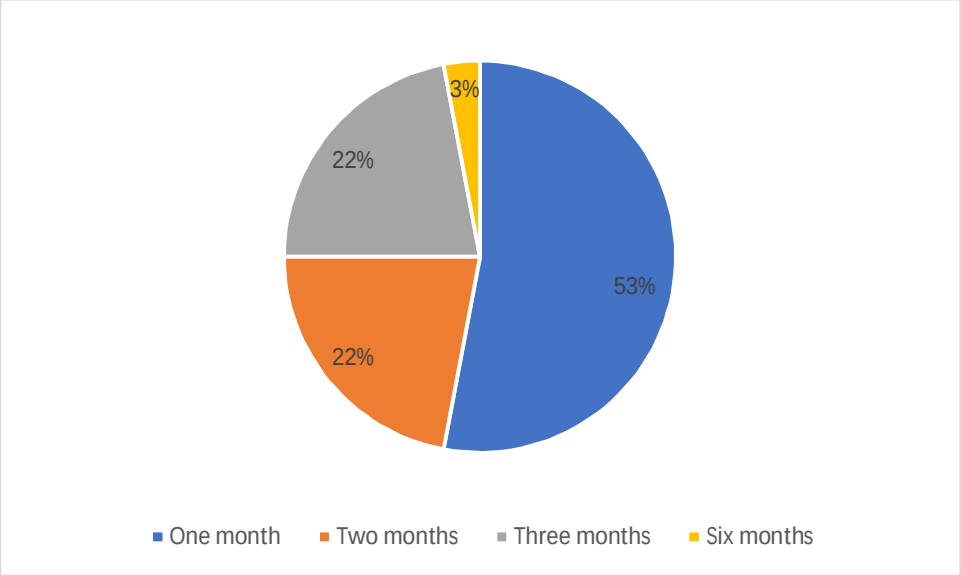
Parameters	Percentages
Hostile	11%
Non-verbal	8%
Verbal	21%
Physical	60%



Interpretation: from the above pie chart 60% of the women are facing physical sexual harassment during job,8% of the women are facing Non-verbal sexual harassment,21% of the women are facing Verbal sexual harassment, 11% of the women are facing Hostile sexual harassment.

2) An Aggrieved women may make a complaint of sexual harassment at workplace within?

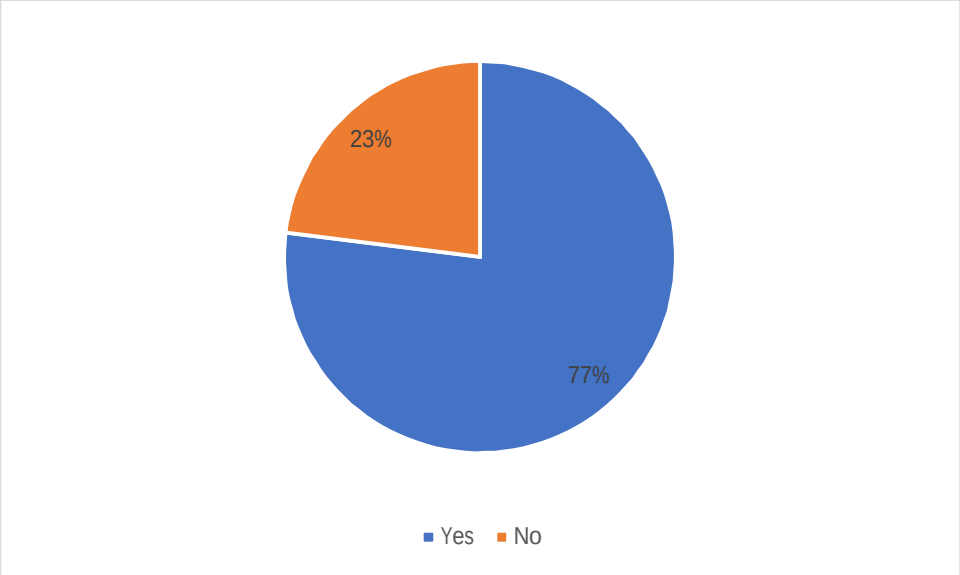
Parameters	Percentages
One month	53%
Two months	22%
Three months	22%
Six months	3%



Interpretation: from the above pie chart about 53% of women are making a complaint of sexual harassment at workplace within one month, 22% of women are making a complaint of sexual harassment at workplace within two months, 22% of women are making a complaint of sexual harassment at workplace within three months, 3 % of women are making a complaint of sexual harassment at workplace within six months.

3) Do you fear losing your job after/ if making sexual harassment report?

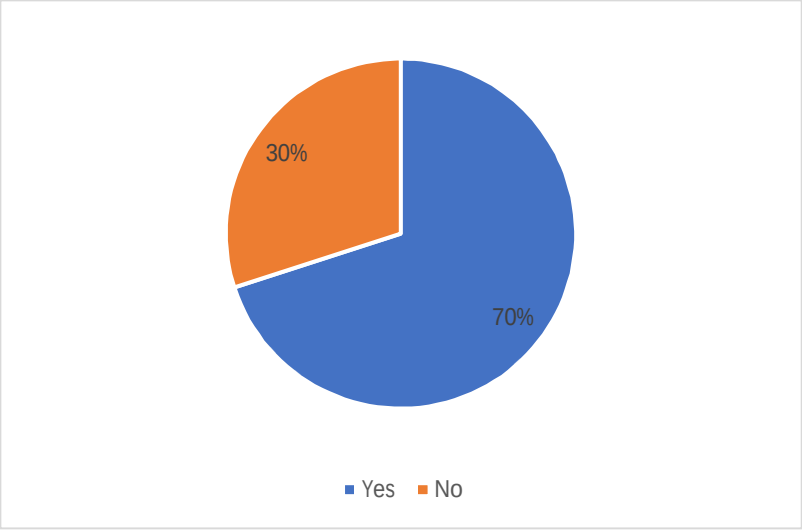
Parameters	Percentages
Yes	77%
No	23%



Interpretation: the above pie chart is representing that 77% of women have fear of losing job after making sexual harassment report, 23% of women have fear of losing job after making sexual harassment report.

4) Did you report the harassment to a supervisor or manager/ management at work?

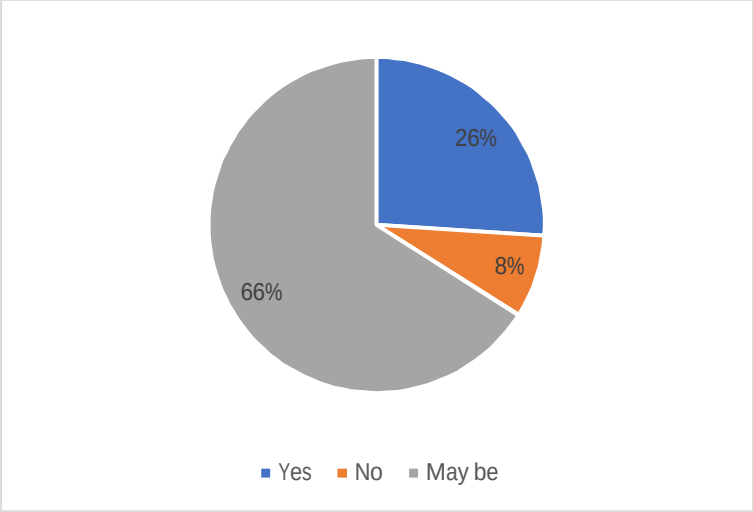
Parameters	Percentages
Yes	70%
No	30%



Interpretation: From the above information 70% of the women's are reporting the harassment to a supervisor or manager, 30% of the women's are reporting the harassment to a supervisor or manager.

5) Do you feel your work or career would negative effect because you reported being sexually harassed?

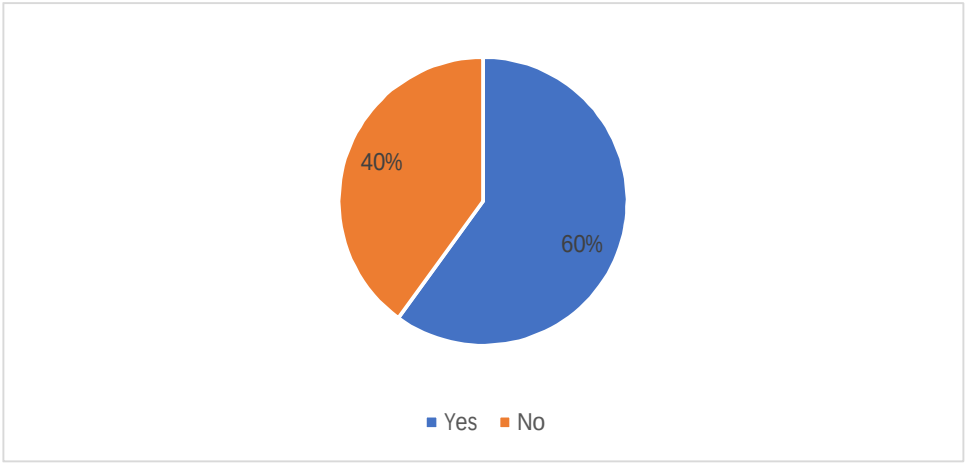
Parameters	Percentages
Yes	26%
No	8%
May be	66%



Interpretation: from the above information 26% of women's says that they feel their work or career would negative effect because you reported being sexually harassed,8% of women's says that they feel their work or career will not be negative effect because you reported being sexually harassed, 66% of women's says that they feel their work or career will be neither or nor negative effect because you reported being sexually harassed,

6) Have you ever received text messages or emails at work, from someone at work, which are sexual/unwanted in nature?

Parameters	Percentages
Yes	60%
No	40%

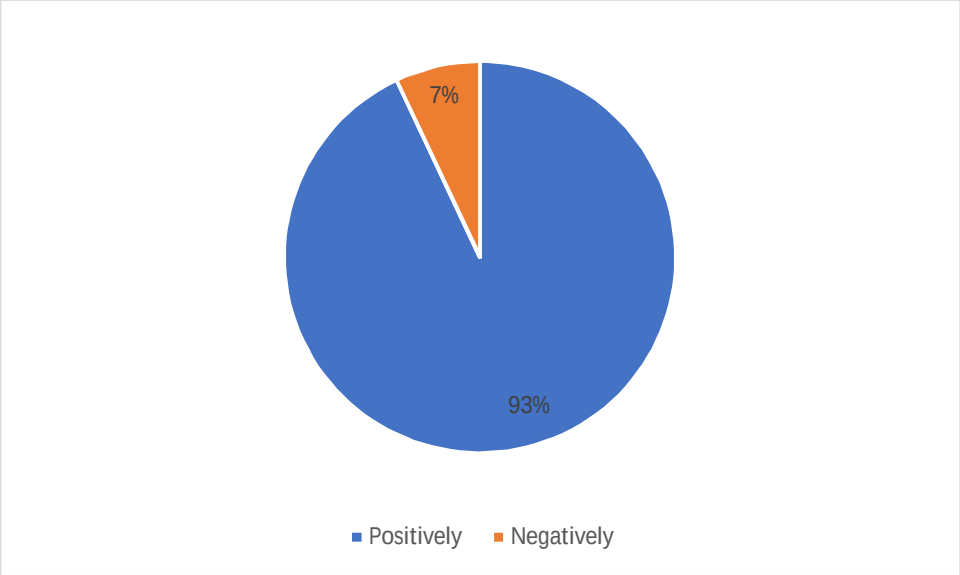


Interpretation: from the above information 60% of women's received text messages or emails at work, from someone at work, which are sexual/unwanted in nature, 40% of women's received text messages or emails at work, from someone at work, which are sexual/unwanted in nature.

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7) How do you expected to treat by your supervisor or manager or colleagues for reporting sexual harassment?

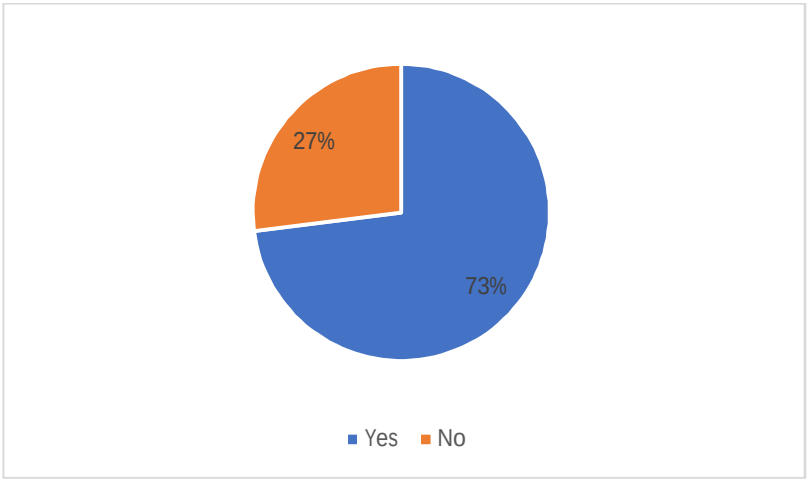
Parameters	Percentages
Positively	93%
Negative	7%



Interpretation: from the above pie chart 93% of women's expected to treat positively by supervisor or manager or colleagues for reporting sexual harassment, 7% women's expected to treat negatively by supervisor or manager or colleagues for reporting sexual harassment.

8) Do you know how to report a sexual harassment incident if happened at your workplace?

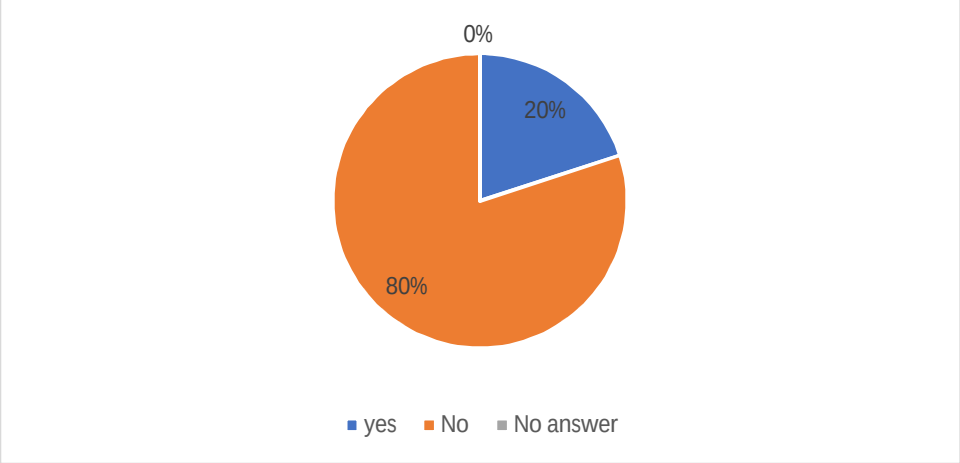
Parameters	Percentages
Yes	73%
No	27%



Interpretation: from the above pie chart 73% of women's know how to report a sexual harassment incident if happened at workplace, 27% of women's know how to report a sexual harassment incident if happened at workplace.

9) Have you ever been "rated" based on looks or sexuality in your workplace?

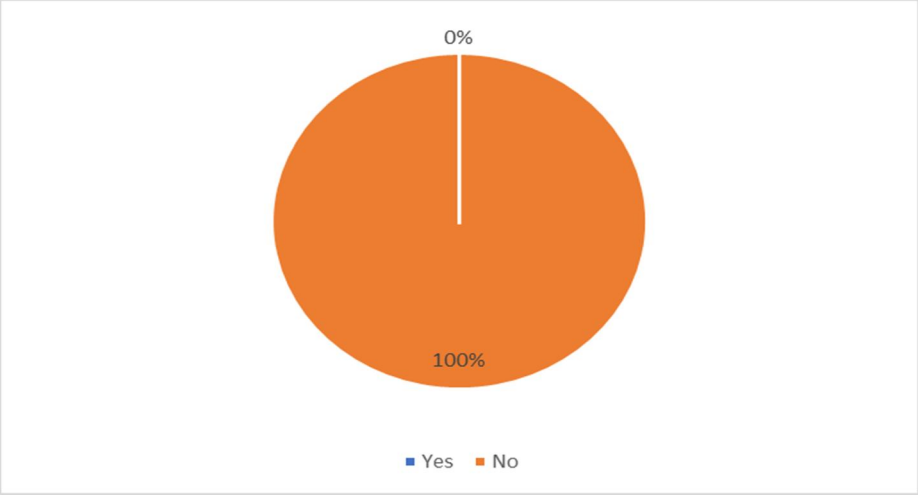
Parameters	Percentages
Yes	20%
No	80%
No answer	0%



Interpretation: from the above pie chart we can conclude that 80% of women's are been "rated" based on looks or sexuality in your workplace, 20% of women's are been "rated" based on looks or sexuality in your workplace.

10) Have you ever had someone follow you and/or badger you to go out with them after work?

Parameters	Percentages
Yes	0%
No	100%



Interpretation: the above pie chart depicts that no women have ever had someone follow and badger them to go out with them after work.

VI. FINDINGS

1) According to response of question no.1, in my survey, I found every woman has faced SH in different ways such as:
2) 60% of physical, 8% of Non-verbal, 21% of verbal, 11% of Hostile.
3) Most of the female employees preferred not to answer about the action taken by the management.
4) Most of the women do not face any kind of receiving unwanted mails messages while some of them face the same problem but some preferred to not to answer this question.
5) They don't fear of losing their job and do not feel any kind of negative effect on their career if they do any sexual harassment complaint.
6) Most of the women do not face any kind of receiving unwanted mails or messages.
7) Many women did not report any incident to their managers, supervisors or management, while some of them had made complaint to their managers or supervisors.
8) Most of the females know how to report any sexual harassment incident but they all are wrong in their approach as no one exactly know the actually procedure, concerned person whom to complaint.
9) Most of the women never rated based on their looks or sexuality while some of them face this kind of sexual harassment.
10) Most of the women employees never followed or badgered by anyone after work while few of them have tolerated about this psychological sexual harassment.

A. *Suggestions*

1) Employees should be educated on what constitutes sexual harassment through regular training sessions.
2) A confidential and accessible complaint mechanism should be established.
3) A safe and respectful work environment should be promoted.
4) Employers should review and update their sexual harassment policies regularly to ensure compliance with changing laws and regulations.
5) Employers should establish a diversity and inclusion committee to promote a respectful work culture and address issues related to sexual harassment.
6) Employers should conduct regular surveys to assess the prevalence of sexual harassment and identify areas for improvement.

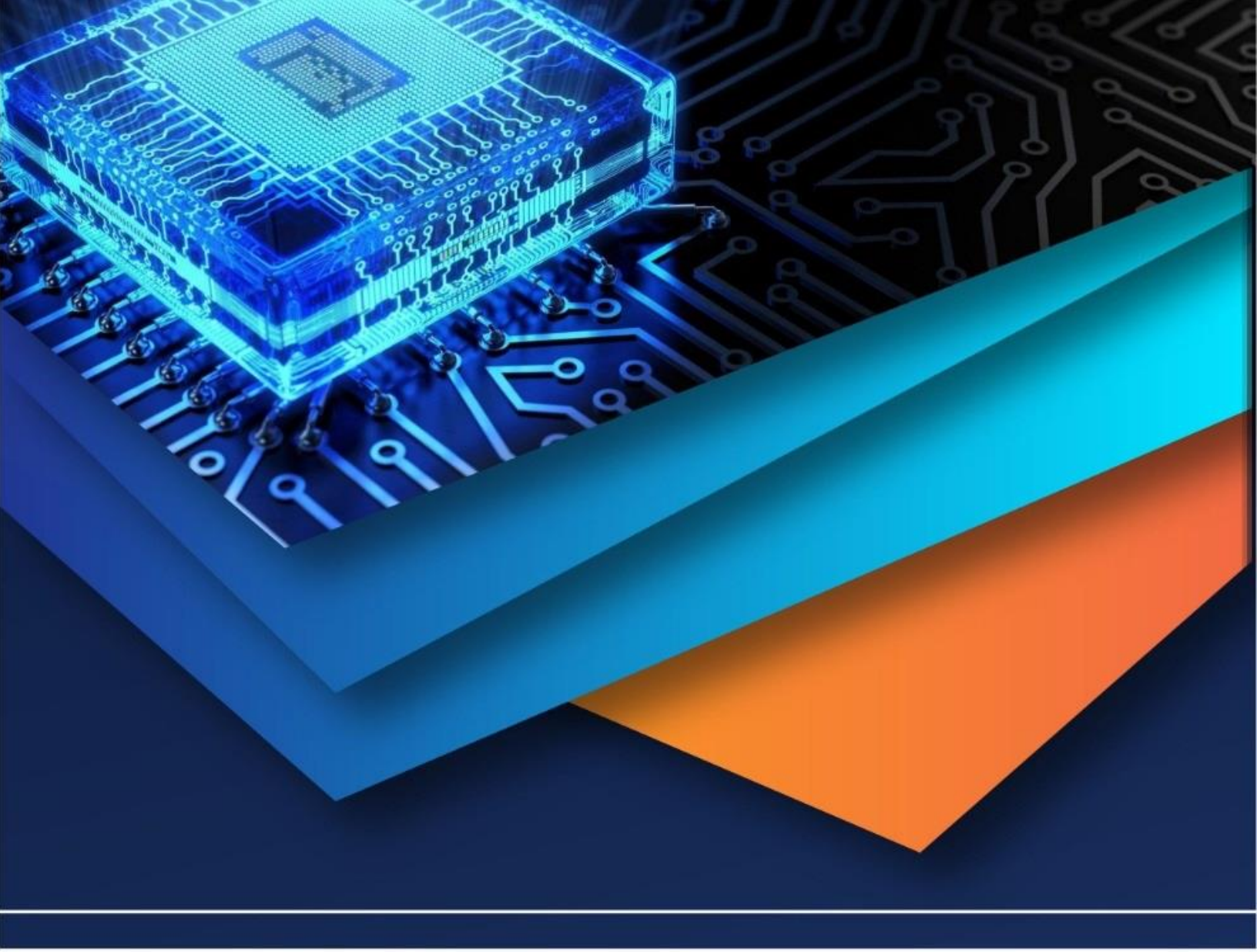
VII. CONCLUSION

Sexual harassment of women at workplace is a pervasive and insidious issue that affects millions of women worldwide. Every woman deserves to feel safe and respected at work. But for many, sexual harassment is a painful reality. It's a betrayal trust, a violation of dignity, and a threat to their well-being. sexual harassment of women in the workplace is a critical issue that requires immediate attention and action. It not only violates the fundamental rights of individual but also creates a hostile work environment that can hinder productivity and morale. To combat this pervasive problem, organizations must establish clear policies, provide comprehensive training, and foster an atmosphere of respect and support. By taking these proactive measures, companies can protect their employees, promote gender equality, and cultivate where everyone feels safe and valued in their professional roles. Let's work together to build workplaces where every woman can thrive, free from fear and harassment. Where every woman is valued, respected and protected.

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